

1005

5 JUN 1949

# GENERAL

1. Sforza submits resignation-- Prime Minister De Gasperi has informed US Ambassador Dunn that Foreign Minister Sforza, before leaving on 31 May to receive a scholastic degree in France, insisted upon submitting his resignation on the grounds that recent British action on Cyrenaica and Libya without giving previous notice of abandoning the Bevin-Sforza agreement has "completely undermined" his position before the Italian people. De Gasperi added that he had told Sforza he would take no action on his resignation until his return from France and that he was keeping it secret until that time. De Gasperi also told Dunn that he would make every effort to persuade Sforza to withdraw his resignation, as his departure from the Cabinet now would have a very grave effect in Italy.

S/T3

(CIA Comment: Although the Cabinet stands solidly behind Sforza, many political groups hold him responsible for the failure of the UN to arrive at a colonial solution favorable to Italy. His resignation would: (a) broaden political opposition to the Government's policy; (b) intensify Italian anti-British sentiment; and (c) hamper the implementation of the Atlantic Pact in Italy.)

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